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TAGS: PREL UNSC IR JA

SUBJECT: JAPAN "NOT COMPLACENT" ABOUT BID FOR NON-PERMANENT SEAT

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Jim Zumwalt for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Japan is "doing our best" to line up support for its bid to win a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for next session, according to MOFA U.N. Policy Division Director Naoto Hisajima. He refused to be drawn out on details or numbers, but said Japanese missions abroad are working in capitals and in New York to get support for its bid against the Iranians for the seat. MOFA, he continued, took advantage of hosting the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) last May to directly seek support from the more than 40 African heads of state who attended. While Iran was granted permission to dispatch an observer delegation to TICAD, MOFA is reasonably certain the Iranians refrained from lobbying the Africans on Japan's home turf, reported both Hisajima and Second Middle East Division Deputy Director Michiko Miyano. At the same time, Japan is under no illusions about Iranian efforts to gain votes, and notes that Tehran was probably pressing this hard when it hosted the Non-Aligned Movement meeting last week. The bottom line for Japan on this, said Hisajima, is that "we are making steady progress but it is dangerous to be complacent, and we will make very serious efforts until the last moment."

SCHIEFFER